

properly done, composting is a process that does not create an odor or attract animals or insects. Compost is a useful soil enhancer, improving water and nutrient holding capacity of most soils. Contact your local library or cooperative extension office for complete composting instructions.

• USED MOTOR OIL:

Motor oil never wears out, it only gets dirty. Improperly discarded oil contaminates surface and ground water. Once reprocessed, used motor oil can be marketed as heating fuel, fuel oil or lubricating oil. Many garages and service stations accept used motor oil; however, call ahead to be sure. Project ROSE (Recycled Oil Saves Energy) can also provide information on local used oil collection sites in Alabama - call 1-800-452-5901.



• **PLASTICS:** PET (code 1) beverage bottles and HDPE (code 2) milk and water jugs are the most commonly recycled plastic containers. Several other types of plastics have the potential to be recycled, but contact your local recycling center



to see which, if any, plastics are being accepted: Manufacturers are using recycled plastics to produce automotive parts,

carpet, floor mats, fiberfill, plastic lumber and other products.

Many other materials are being recycled or will be recycled as markets are identified and collection systems established. These include: cardboard, office paper, auto batteries, phone books, magazines, appliances, and textiles.



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recycled paper.

TIPS FOR REDUCING WASTE

In addition to recycling, Alabamians should be environmentally-wise consumers and make choices daily that reduce the amount of waste they produce. The following tips can help:

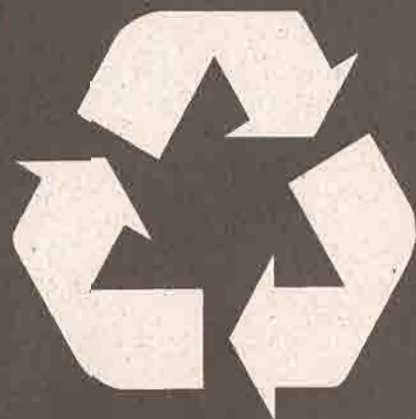
- Avoid purchasing disposable products whenever possible.
- Consider the amount of packaging on an item before purchasing it. Overpackaging creates waste.
- Use resealable containers for lunches and leftovers instead of disposable foils and wraps.
- Consider the recyclability of an item before purchasing it. Look for the recycling symbol.
- Use cloth whenever possible; i.e. napkins, towels and clean-up cloths.
- Donate old clothing to charities or use for rags.
- Purchase items in the large, economy size and use concentrates when possible.
- Make two-sided photocopies at work and school.
- Reuse cardboard containers and paper boxes.
- Purchase products, particularly paper products, made from recycled materials. Look for the recycling symbol.

For more information on recycling and other solid waste management alternatives in your area, contact your city/county recycling or solid waste coordinator, or ...

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BE PART OF THE SOLUTION...



RECYCLE ALABAMA



WHAT IS RECYCLING?

Recycling is a process through which materials that might otherwise be wasted are collected and reprocessed for conversion into new products that otherwise would have been made with virgin materials.

Recycling is a key element in an "integrated waste management" system. An integrated waste management system is defined as the complementary use of a variety of waste management practices to safely and effectively handle the municipal solid waste stream with the least adverse impact on human health and the environment. An integrated waste management system will contain some or all of the following components:

- Source reduction and reuse
- Recycling and composting
- Waste combustion
- Landfilling



WHY RECYCLE?

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that more than 200 million tons of municipal solid waste are generated in our nation each year! Many areas in Alabama currently face serious problems in safely and effectively managing the garbage they generate. As a state, we are generating more trash than ever before. At the same time, we are finding that there are limits to the traditional trash management practice of landfilling. As the generation of municipal solid waste continues to increase, capacity to handle it is decreasing. Therefore, we must identify and utilize ways of handling our solid wastes other than landfilling, and recycling is one of those ways.

Recycling is important for a variety of reasons: it saves energy, it saves natural resources, it saves room in our landfills, it provides raw materials for new products, and it moves Alabamians away from the "throw away" society we've become. In addition, Alabama law now requires that cities and counties develop and adopt comprehensive solid waste management plans. These plans must address how local governments will meet the statewide

25% waste reduction and recycling goal. Alabama law also requires all state agencies, K-12 public schools, and state universities and post secondary schools to implement their own recycling programs. Still not convinced? Consider these facts:

- There's a 95% energy savings every time an existing aluminum can is recycled instead of creating a new one from virgin raw materials.
- Every ton of paper recycled saves about 7,000 gallons of water, 4,100 kwh of electricity, 17 trees and 3.5 cubic yards of landfill space.
- Steel and glass are 100% recyclable and can be recycled forever without loss in quality to the new manufactured product.
- 10 million gallons of oil were spilled in America's worst oil disaster - yet 570 million gallons of oil are improperly dumped each year. Households account for nearly one-third of this oil.
- Plastics are petroleum-based products; therefore, recycling them conserves natural resources as well as energy.
- Yard waste makes up 18-20% of the waste stream and should be composted rather than landfilled.
- A newspaper can be recycled 5 to 6 times through the de-inking process.

WHAT IS RECYCLABLE?

? Before initiating any recycling collection program you **must** first identify what markets are available in your local area for the materials being recycled. Some materials may be accepted as a part of a city/county recycling program at curbside or at a drop-off location, while other materials may be taken to a buy-back center, scrap metal or junk dealer. Check your local yellow pages or call your city's recycling coordinator or sanitation department. They can assist you with information on recyclables in your community.

Commonly recycled items include:

• **NEWSPAPERS** are an obvious choice for recycling. They take up a lot of space in our trash containers and landfills. Newspapers should be stacked in manageable bundles or placed in a paper bag.

Recycled papers can be made into many other products, such as molded fiber packaging, home insulation, cereal/food boxes, roofing materials and bedding for animals.



• **METAL:** Steel and aluminum cans and many other metal household products are recyclable. Crushing cans is not necessary, but saves space. Many recyclers accept used appliances, lawn furniture frames, paint and aerosol cans, and a variety of other scrap metal products - check to see what is available in your community. Metals are recycled into several items including new cans, auto and machine parts and construction materials.



• **GLASS:** Any glass food and beverage containers can be recycled, but must be separated by color: clear, brown and green. Used glass containers should be reasonably clean and free of lids and caps. Recycled glass is crushed, melted and made into new glass containers.

• **ORGANIC WASTE:** Grass clippings, leaves, and vegetative kitchen wastes can be recycled at home through composting or by letting the clippings remain on the lawn after cutting. Composting these organic wastes instead of bagging them for trash avoids the needless waste of landfill space. When

